

(289)
A

SERMON

Preach'd at the

FUNERAL

Of the Reverend

Thomas Jekyll, D.D.

L A T E

Preacher at the *New-Chappel, Westminster,*

OCTOBER 7. 1698.

By JOHN Lord Bishop of Chichester.

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T O M Y

Good Friend Mrs. Jekyll,

Reli& of Dr. Thomas Jekyll.

M A D A M,

I *was the Desire of our Deceased Friend, that I should Preach his Funeral Sermon; and it is at Your's that I now publish it. I am truly sensible that the design of both was to do some service to Religion, and to those that do survive. It being (as he well knew) one of the best Opportunities that we have for it, when we have, as it were, the Dead speaking to the Living, and the Occasion giving Life and Force to the Doctrine. And great pity it is, that this*

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should

Epistle Dedicatory.

should any where grow into disuse; and that the Good that might by such seasonable Discourses redound to the Souls of Men, too often gives way to the Pomp of the Funeral. We all have a Loss by the Death of our Deceased Friend; the Church, his Auditory, and his Acquaintance; but more especially You, and the Branches derived from both. It is a Loss that only the Father of all Mercies, and God of all Comfort, can support You under; and to Him I commit You, who has promised that all things shall work together for good to them that love God. I am,

M A D A M,

Your Faithful Friend and Servant,

JOHN CHICHESTER.

A
S E R M O N

Preached at the
Funeral of Dr. Jekyll.

Hebrews IV. 1.

*Let us therefore fear, lest a Promise being left us
of entering into his rest, any of you should seem
to come short of it.*

THIS Epistle was written to the *Hebrews*,
that is, such *Jews* as had been bred up un-
der the Law of *Moses*, but were converted
to the Christian Faith: And the chief de-
sign of it was to confirm them in it; that neither
by the Force of their former Education, the Fear of
Persecution, nor the sly Insinuations of false Teachers,
they should be prevailed with (as too many had been)
to desert it. To this purpose, amongst other Argu-
ments used to dissuade them from so doing, the Apo-
stle shews the *Jewish* Constitution to have been tem-
porary

Hebr. 9: 9. porary and imperfect, a *Figure for the time then present*; and a *Shadow of good things to come*: and that the Persons and Places, the Ceremonies and Ordinances, the Actions and Events of it had a respect chiefly to what was to be, and should be compleated under the Gospel. Of this kind was *Canaan*, a Land of Rest, which God promised to their Forefathers: And yet notwithstanding, for their Unbelief and Disobedience, he swore that none of that Generation (except *Caleb* and *Joshua*) should enter into it, and
 10. 1.
 Ch. 3: 11, &c. so their carcases fell in the *Wilderness*.

This was the state then, and parallel to this, saith he, is the state of Christians now, who have a Rest, as they had, and which God has promis'd. But withal, the same Conditions are annex'd to This, as were before to That; and so no more can we enter into the Christian Rest, because of Unbelief, than they could for the same reason enter into their Rest, the Land of *Canaan*, as the Apostle argues: And accordingly he infers in the Text; *Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.*

In discoursing upon which Words,

1. I shall consider the State here described and contained in the Words, *His rest*.
2. The Security and Certainty of that Rest, if we our selves come not short of it.
3. The Possibility and Danger of falling short of this Rest, notwithstanding it is promis'd.
4. I shall shew, that from these Considerations, there is sufficient Reason for the Caution in the Text, *Let us therefore fear, lest, &c.*

1. I shall

1. I shall consider the State, called here, *His rest*. The Rest promised to the *Jews* was Temporal, a Rest which after forty years travel in the Wilderness, they entered upon under the Conduct of *Joshua*, according to God's promise. But, saith our Apostle, This was *the Gospel preached unto them*, v. 2. That is, their Rest in *Canaan* was a Type and Figure of a more excellent State, more clearly revealed in the Gospel. This he proves from *Psalms* 95. where it is said, that upon the Unbelief and Disobedience of that Generation, God swore that they should not enter into his Rest. That was thus far literally true of the *Israelites*, whose *carcasses fell in the Wilderness*: But withal he shews, that it is there to be understood in a higher sense, and not of a Rest that is past, such as God's was, when he ceased from the Works of Creation: Nor can it be understood of *Canaan*, for that was a Rest they enter'd upon four hundred years before the time of *David*. But it must be understood of another sort of Rest yet to come, which the Sabbath and *Canaan* were a Type of. This he farther confirms by the Observation he makes on the phrase in the Psalmist, *To day*, v. 7, 8. *after so long a time*, from the entrance into *Canaan*, to the time of *David*. For if *Jesus* (that is *Joshua*) v. 9. *had given them rest*, then would not he afterward have spoken of another day. From all which the Apostle concludes, *There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God*.

But as the Rest here spoken of is yet to come, so it is a Rest far more excellent than that of a Temporal *Canaan*. But this would not be so, if that *Psalms* were only a Prophecy of *some peaceable and Halcyonian days* that the Christian Church should enjoy about a thousand years after that time; during only the short
Reigns

D. Ham. in cap.
3. & 4.

Reigns of the two *Roman* Emperors, *Vespasian*, and his Son *Titus* (s some have conceiv'd.) Can we think that so short a time of Rest, as the *Christians* had between *Nero* and *Domitian*, could be the subject of that Prophecy? And that this was all the comfort the Apostle gave to his desponding *Hebrews*, That the storm coming on, or that then overtook them, should soon vanish; and then they should have as many years of Rest for it? Is this all the Rest, which many of those he wrote this Epistle to, should never live to see, and which a natural, or else a violent Death by Persecution, might deprive them of their part in? Is this all which the Apostle means, when he saith, *There remaineth a Rest, or Sabbatism, to the people of God; and that he that is entered into it, hath ceased from his own works, from all the toil and distress, the troubles and sorrows of an afflicted life?* No, certainly it is a more excellent and divine Rest than that of an Earthly *Canaan*, which is thus emphatically called *God's rest*; a perfect and an eternal Rest, resembling that of God; when they

Revel. 14. 13.

rest from all their labours, and their works follow them. A Rest, which above all they are to be solicitous about; *Let us labour* (saith the Apostle) *therefore to enter into that rest, v. 11.* And in the Text, *Let us fear—lest we come short of it.*

Deut. 12. 10.

Heaven is indeed a Rest with respect to this present life; as that of the *Israelites* was, when they rested after their Pilgrimage in the Wilderness, and from all their enemies round about, so that they dwelt in safety. But withal, it is a state of Enjoyment, Happiness, and Perfection, such a Rest as God himself doth enjoy, and they shall enjoy with him. For it is called *his rest*, not only as to what God himself doth enjoy, but with respect to his Promise, by which he

hath

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hath made it ours, and assured it to us. Which brings to

2. The Security we have of this Rest, and that is from the Promise of God. Thus it was in the Typical state of the *Jews*, to whom *Canaan* was promis'd, called therefore *the Land of promise*, Hebr. 11. 9. And after the same manner is this Christian Rest confirmed, call'd therefore *the promise of an eternal inheritance*, Hebr. 9. 15. and by way of Eminency, *The promise*, Hebr. 10. 36.

At the first it was a meer act of Grace and Favour; there was neither Merit before-hand on our part, nor could there be Recompence after: But now it is unalienable, and what we can no more fail of obtaining upon the terms of the Gospel, than God can be unfaithful, and cease to be what he is: And therefore for our comfort and satisfaction, as *life and immortality is brought to light through the Gospel*; so he has been pleas'd to pass over a Right unto us by his Promise, and hath given us the liberty of pleading it. Upon the undoubted Title thereby given unto us, we are said to *have everlasting life*, Joh. 3. 36: because, by virtue of the Promise, we are as sure of it, as if we were actually possess'd of it. So that we need not look any farther for a ground of our hope and confidence than this; and if we perform the conditions required of us, and that there be not in us *an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God* — if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end, we are (saith our Apostle) *made partakers of Christ*, i.e. of all the benefits here and hereafter which he hath purchased, and God through him hath promised. But if we fail on our part by not performing the Conditions, if we are wanting in Cau-

2 Tim. 1. 10.

Chap. 3. 12, 14.

tion and Diligence, we disparage the State, the Rest, which God hath promis'd: And if we are wanting in our trust and confidence in God, upon his promise; we disparage him, and divest him of those perfections of Goodness and Faithfulness, which make him to be what he is, and without which he could not be God.

1 Joh 5. 11. But as certain as this *Record* is, that *God hath thus given us eternal life*: and that *this life is in his Son*,
2 Cor. 1. 20. *in whom all the promises of God are Yea and Amen*;

Yet,

3. There is a possibility of falling short of this Rest. There could be nothing more firm than the Promise of *Canaan* made to *Abraham* and his Carnal Seed: But we see, for want of having Trust and Faith in God, which were necessarily and indispensably requir'd, all that came out of *Egypt*, except two, fell in the Wilderness, and *they could not enter in, because of their unbelief*: And God that had thus obliged himself by Promise to give them that Land for an Inheritance, did also swear, that they should not enter into his Rest. Now if those Murmurers and Unbelievers were excluded that pleasant Land, which was thus promised and secured; then there is the same reason, that the Christian and Eternal Rest, which is infinitely beyond that Terrestrial Rest, should not be obtained without the like qualifications then required of them; and that Infidelity and Disobedience should now as well deprive us of the greater, as it did them of the less valuable Inheritance. For the Promise of God doth not any more oblige him now, than it did then, to exceed the Measures set to his Kindness and Beneficence. And therefore as the Apostle hath compared State with State, in the nature of it, as it's a Rest; and in the Assurance we have of it, as it is promised: So he
doth

Chap. 3. 19.

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doth also carry on the Parallel in the Conditions upon which the Promise is suspended, and they are Faith and Obedience ; the hearkning to the Voice of God, and not hardning their hearts. And accordingly he Ver. 7. takes occasion from what befel the *Jews*, to exhort his Christian *Hebrews* to take warning by them, in the Text, *Let us therefore fear, &c.*

So that whatever Proof we have of the Goodness of God in revealing such a State of Rest and Happiness to us ; yet as the meer Revelation of such a State will not entitle us to it without a Promise, so neither will the Promise alone alter the case, as long as it is confined and limited by certain Conditions to those that are duly qualified for it. *Let us fear*, saith the Apostle, *lest a promise being left us, &c.* Which Caution needed not to have been added, if there had been no danger of falling short ; and fall short we could not, if the Promise had given us an absolute and unlimited Title to it. So that the Caution it self doth suppose a Qualification on our part to be necessary : and yet not content with that, the Apostle, as sensible that we cannot get far enough from such an impendent Danger ; he adds, *Let us fear, lest any of you seem to come short of it.* Where if the Greek word *doxē*, which we translate *seem*, be not an expletive, without any determinate signification, (as sometimes it is) it shews that there is so much hazard of Mis-carrying and Apostacy, by reason of the temptations of this present life, proceeding from the World, the Flesh, and the Devil ; and so great a prejudice will redound to us, if we do, that we cannot be too cautious. *Beware*, saith he, *lest any of you seem to come short of it.* Which brings us to the next General.

Luk. 8. 13.
compared with
Mat 13. 12, &c.

4. There is sufficient reason for this Caution of the Apostle, *Let us fear, &c.*

Here I shall look back upon the Text, and shall apply it to the several Considerations here referred to, as so many Arguments to a vigilant Circumspection and diligent Care. As,

1. An Argument may be taken from the Nature of the State, as it is called *a Rest*, and *His Rest*.

Rest is a word that signifies more than what this World affords; there is no Person, no Condition of life can challenge it, or entitle it self to it; it is not to be found within us, nor without us. Nor within us; for we have Infirmities grow up in us, as well as Troubles that surround us. Our Bodies are in their composition frail and crazy, subject to numberless Diseases; the Air we breathe in, the Diet we feed on, the Passions of the Mind, nay even the Medicines we use by way of prevention or remedy, do often beget or stir up in us those humours, that carry us out of the World, or unfit us for the enjoyment of it. And our Minds have Infirmities as well as our Bodies; our Tempers fickle and uncertain; we suffer by Precipitancy on the one hand, and Obstinacy on the other; by Imprudence, Neglects and Follies. And our Bodies and Souls as conjoyned, do contribute to each others infirmities; and the dispute between them is, whether Temper or Reason shall govern. So that we our selves prevent, and often supplant our own satisfaction.

But then were it otherwise with us, that as we naturally love our selves, so we may attain to Self-satisfaction; yet however willing and dispos'd we are to be

be quiet and at rest, we must ask leave of a thousand things to obtain and secure it ; of every one we have to deal with, and live amongst ; for our Conversation, our Business, our Professions, that are in themselves useful and necessary, yet do minister to our trouble ; for thence do arise suspicions and jealousies, quarrels and misunderstandings. Or suppose we lived so as to assist and be assisted by others Friendships with cheerfulness, and lived in perfect Peace and Amity, as we are private Persons ; yet we are but part of a City or Nation, and so must fare as the Nation or City doth, and lose by its loss as we may gain by its gain, and must rejoyce and mourn, and be as the general State of the Country is. Suppose farther, that a Nation would be quiet ; that the Government is framed for Peace, and the Rights of Governours and Governed so well laid out, and all publick Orders so well observ'd and inviolably maintain'd, that there are no jarrings nor discord, no grudgings nor animosities : Yet this is but one Nation, and this to the World is as one Man to another, and so can no longer be quiet than other Nations will permit it. The Ambition or Covetousness of a Foreign Prince may bring him upon them, and in their own defence they must take up Arms, and engage in a doubtful War. So that we may as reasonably expect, that the Body which hath so many several Vessels, Humours and Juices, should enjoy a constant and uninterrupted State of Health, and all those Humours be so exactly ballanced and allayed, that there should be no commotion or disturbance in it, as that this World should be a place of Rest. Men must be without Bodies, and there must be no such thing as Sickness and Mortality : Or without Passions and Appetites ; and so no such thing

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as Ambition and Pride, Anger and Revenge, Covetousness or Lust, Prejudices, nor Interest: they must have nothing within to dispose, and nothing without to excite, if they will talk of Rest, and expect it. That is an *Utopian* State, and has here no other Existence than in Imagination.

But then if we add to the Account the Providence of God, and the Accidents of Life, the Argument grows upon us; we are never secure; and we know not, but though the Sun rises upon us in its glory and brightness, it may be with us as it was with *Sodom*, and close in a dismal destruction; and we that rise in a State of Ease and Security, may lie down, if we can do that, in Sorrow and Anguish, and the most doleful dejection of Mind. Thus it was with the Fool in the Gospel, that when he sung a *Requiem* to himself, *Soul, take thine ease, &c.* met with a terrible conclusion and disappointment when God said unto him, *Thou fool, this night shall thy Soul be requir'd of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?* The prospect of which is sufficient to make the best and most prosperous condition in the World uneasy, since we must either want, or enjoy with fear; and next to the total deprivation of the comforts of this life, nothing is more intolerable than the fear of losing them.

Now what sad Reflections are these? How miserable must be the state of Mankind, if this be all that a Man has to enjoy, all that he has to comfort him in the enjoyment? When he has thus the disturbance of the Ocean, but not the confinement of it; nor can it be said of any Miseries he is incident unto, as it is of that, *Hitherto shall they come, and no further.*

Luk. 12. 19.

Job 38. 11.

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II

But is there no relief in this case? nothing better to be expected? Yes, saith our Apostle, *there remaineth a rest to the people of God.* There is such a State, but it *remaineth*, it is in reserve for such as do believe, desire, and endeavour after it. This was the Temper and Condition of the Patriarchs of old, they lived and died in the Faith of this; they *saw the promises afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them; and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the Earth—but desired a better Country, that is, an heavenly,* as the Apostle shews. Here alone is that Rest, which is God's; in whose presence is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore. Where the happy Souls shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, and that all tears shall be wiped from their eyes. Neither can they die any more, for they are equal, and like unto the Angels. This is the City of God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, where are Myriads and Ten thousands, and an innumerable Company of Angels, and the Spirits of just Men made perfect. Here alone is Satisfaction, Stability and Certainty; this is the time when all the Troubles of this life shall close in the Happiness of another; where there will be no infirmities, no necessities, no appetites or irregular passions, no divisions or enmities, no seducers or temptations, no fraud or circumvention, no prejudice or suspicions, nothing that is evil, but all harmonious, equal and delightful. And of which we may say all this and more; more indeed it is than we can say or describe: So the Apostle, *It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.*

Hebr. 11. 13.

Psal. 16. 11.

Rev. 7. 16, 17.

Ἱστανγέλοι.

Luk. 20. 36.

Heb. 12. 22, 23.

1 Joh. 3. 2.

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Is there now such a State, such a Rest to be had? Is there a possibility, a certainty of obtaining it? May we who are here as it were upon a wide Ocean, continually tossed by the furious Winds and boisterous Waves, and in danger every moment to be swallowed up by them, may we arrive to a Harbour of Rest and Safety, and have a Star and Pilot, and an unerring Compass to guide and direct us? And shall we be as the *Israelites*, unbelieving and obstinate, that despised the pleasant Land, and would rather be returning to *Egypt*, and there feed upon Garlick and Onions, than venture forward to take possession of that, where they should *not lack any thing*. O how much doth Unbelief blind the Minds of Men! How much doth the love of this World, and the poor Enjoyments of it, insatuate them! That when they are hurried from one Misery to another, and can hardly look out but they see Objects sufficient to terrify them, and have the reliques of many a miserable Shipwreck floating in their view, and are equally expos'd to the same Dangers; yet chuse rather to run the hazard of being miserable, and eternally miserable, than to hearken to the Voice of God, and observe those Measures that will infallibly direct, and bring them in the conclusion to a place of safety and undisturbed repose.

Surely we cannot but perceive, and our own experience will convince us, that this World is not a Rest; that *Man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward*. We cannot but observe (how hood-wink'd soever we are in other matters) that in a few days, after many other Changes, and a Course and Succession of other Miseries; that the last Enemy of this World, Death, will seize upon us, and carry us out of it.

We

Psal. 106. 24.

Numb. 14. 4.

Deut. 8. 9.

Job 5. 7.

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We cannot but think, that though the spark of an Animal life be extinguished, and we are then dead to all the Enjoyments of this present state; yet that our Souls which thus think, are immortal, and never die. We cannot but think, that as the spirit within us is immortal, so there is a state suitable to such a spirit; another World that it must live in, and doth upon its separation pass into. We cannot but think that the future state is a state of Recompence, and that we are therein accountable, and shall be determined to Happiness or Misery according to what we have done in the Body. We cannot but think, that however it fares with good Men here, how deplorable soever their present condition may be, yet that *it shall at last be well with them that fear God*; and that their light afflictions, their temptations, and mortifications, which are but for a moment, shall work out for them a *far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*. Ecclef. 8. 12.

Lastly, We cannot but think, that as this is a desirable state in it self, so that the Thought and Wish of *Balaam* will be (if it is not now) the Thought and Wish of the worst of Men; *Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his*; that is, the beginning of a glorious and happy Eternity. Numb. 23. 10.

Where is now the misery, the hunger and nakedness, the pain and anguish, the poverty and contempt of the once wretched *Lazarus*? Where are the tryals of the cruel mockings and scourgings, of bonds and imprisonment of those, of whom the World was not worthy? Where are the pilgrims and strangers that once wandred about, being destitute, afflicted and tormented? Where is the right hand which was cut off, the right eye that was plucked out, the body Luk. 16. 20.
Heb. 11. 36, &c.
Mat. 5. 29.

- 1 Cor. 9. 27. that was buffered and kept under, and brought into subjection? Where is the strait gate and narrow way, the conflicts and strivings of the Self-denying Christian? Where are the laborious Studies, the Cares and Prayers of the pious and industrious Teacher? Where the Ministry he has fulfill'd and made proof of in his Preaching, Reproving and Exhorting with all Long-suffering and Doctrine? Behold them in their Crowns and Rewards, in their Glories and Triumphs, in the Peace and Comfort, the Perfection and Happiness of Heaven. Behold there *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and all the Prophets in the Kingdom of God.
- Luk. 13. 28. Behold there the pious *Lazarus* in the Bosom of *Abraham*. Behold there the wise and faithful Teachers, shining as the brightness of the Firmament; and those that turn many unto Righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever.
- Dan. 12. 3.

It is God's Rest, who is his own Happiness, and can alone be the Happiness of all out of himself: And there it is that we shall be replenished with the like Goodness and Love, in our proportion, as fills the breast of God himself. There we shall converse with nothing but Perfection; And have our Souls so employed in Acts suitable to the exalted and divine Powers they shall be endued with, that they shall not only be unwearied, but infinitely satisfied in it. Where our Rest shall be the same, and our Will and Desire one with his, who filleth all in all.

Ephes. 1. 23.

A Consideration from the beginning to the end of it, that should excite all the Powers of our Souls to obtain it; and that should make us extremely cautious, lest we fail in our advances and travels towards it. Let us fear, saith the Apostle, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should come short of it.

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2. It is a Rest which is promised, and so is a farther Argument to Caution, *Lest we come short of it.* We have the advantage of the Heathen, and of a mere state of Nature, that we have the Revelation of the Gospel, by which *life and immortality were brought to light.* And this Revelation comes with the greater advantage, as we have the Promise of God to ensure it to us: A favour as well beyond our comprehension, as our discovery and desert. For how could we who have defaced the divine Image, and been Rebels against God, and have forfeited his favour, think of being restored to it? How could we whose Souls are depraved and corrupted, think of being admitted to that state, whereinto no unclean thing can enter? Rev. 21. 27.
How could we that are corruptible, think that we should put on incorruption? And so must conclude, that we are no more fit for that state of holiness and perfection, of fellowship with God and the enjoyment of him, than we are like unto him. But when we are prevented in our thoughts, and these arguings are fore-clos'd by the divine Goodness and Faithfulness, by a Revelation and a Promise: If we in the conclusion prove like those in the Parable, that when invited to a Royal Entertainment, make light of it, and go away, and reject the Counsel of God against our selves; shall we fare better than they, against whom the King sent forth his Armies and destroyed them, and burnt up their City?

Mat. 22. 3, 5, 7.Luk. 7. 20.

It was the aggravation of the Sin of the *Israelites* when they entered the Land of Promise, and had a Land prepared for them, where they had goodly Cities which they builded not, and Houses full of all good things which they filled not, Vineyards and Olive-trees which they planted not; that they tempt-

Exod. 23. 20.Deut. 6. 10, 11, 12.

Pfal. 78. 55, 56. ed and provoked the most High God, and kept not his testimonies.

Mat. 8. 18. And will it not aggravate our guilt, when we have a Revelation as clear as the day, and the promise of God for our security, which is as sure as the Ordinances of Heaven; nay, that is established upon a better and more lasting Foundation? for Heaven and Earth may pass away, but this Word shall not pass away.

Behold then here the greatest testimony of the divine Benignity and Honour, the Treasure of Heaven laid open to our view. Behold God himself proffering Salvation to Sinners, and engaging himself by Promise to bestow it upon us on our acceptance. And what can we plead in our own defence, if at last we shall fall short of it? For can we have any thing more clearly revealed to us, that is not in our view; and which we are not capable, by reason of the imperfection of our Natures, perfectly to understand? Can we have any thing more secured, which we have not in present possession? Can we have any thing more confirmed, than God bearing witness to the truth of it, with signs and wonders, and divers miracles? And can any thing be of greater consequence than the things that are thus revealed, promised and secured? And when a Promise is thus left us of entering into his Rest, *shall not we fear, lest we come short of it?*

Especially
4. When there is a possibility on our part of coming short of it. I say a possibility on our part: For there is nothing wanting on God's, who is not as Man that he should lie, nor the Son of Man that he should repent.

Num. 23. 19.

Hath.

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Hath he said, and shall he not do it? Hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? But yet notwithstanding the amplitude, the fulness and firmness of the Promise, there is a suspension of it, nor will it operate without the conditions belonging to us to perform, without which we are in the same state of darkness and misery, as if there had been no Revelation nor Promise. And when it thus rests on our part, and nothing is wanting to compleat our happiness, but our own consent, could we in reason wish or desire any thing more, when it will be at our own choice and refusal, whether we will be happy or miserable; whether we will be saved or damned? And yet alas! here is the difficulty; the difficulty is to win us over to our own interest; and all the arguments and considerations of the Gospel are to dispose us hereunto, to be willing and desirous of being saved. And all in the conclusion prove generally too little; for we remain stupid and senseless as if we were not at all concerned whether we obtain or fall short of this Rest.

We are as the *Israelites* upon the borders of *Canaan*, a few days would have let them into the possession of the promised Land; it was to be seen from the top of the Mountain; but they believed not the report of *Caleb* and *Joshua*, and murmur'd; so of Six hundred thousand Men that came out of *Egypt*, only those two entred into that Land. And we are upon the borders of the promis'd rest, we have a prospect of it; we have the Gospel preach'd unto us, we have our Education in the Church of Christ, and are members of his Body, are call'd by his Name; have eaten and drank in his presence; but how sad and miserable will our state be, if at the last we shall meet

Numb. 13. 14,
25, 40, 43.
Num. 14. 29.

Mat. 13. 26.
Mat. 7. 23.

meet with, *I knew you not, depart from me?* And yet as near as we are to Heaven, in profession and faith, in appearance and expectation, it is possible and without an extraordinary caution, it is certain, that notwithstanding the promise of God, we may come short of this Rest. Thus our Saviour represents it, *Luk. 13. 24. Strive to enter in at the strait gate, for many I say unto you will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.*

Shall I now need any farther arguments than what the Text affords, to make us cautious lest we come short of this Rest? shall I need to press the Apostle's Exhortation any further? Need we to be advised in this matter, in a matter of so great importance and absolute necessity? Let us, beloved, look within our selves, and try whether our condition be so safe as to be above all hazard; that we are arriv'd to a full satisfaction of mind concerning our title to this Rest. I would that every one that hears me at this time, and that we all were in the state of *St. Paul*, and were arriv'd to that settled and happy temper of soul, as to be able to say, *That to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.* And, *I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord shall give me at that day.*

Phil. 1. 23.

^a Tim. 4 7, 8.

* I could wish that we were out of the reach of all temptations, troubles and dangers, and that there was no need for us to fear, nor occasion to exhort us to it. But what should I wish for that which belongs not to the state in which we are? That is a Rest which remaineth, it is the Rest of Heaven, that is God's Rest. It rather becomes me to return to the Apostle, to exhort and repeat, and exhort again:

Take

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Take heed brethren, saith he, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. Let us labour to enter into that rest. And in the Text, Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should come short of it.

Thus far have I consider'd the Text; and am certain that if our deceased Friend were to speak to you of this Auditory, who were so lately His: He that is now gone to his Rest, would exhort you after the Apostle's manner, to caution and fear, lest having such a promise, any of you should come short of it.

It was in St. Paul's phrase, his heart's desire and prayer to God, that ye might be saved. This was the Theme and Subject he continually insisted upon, and made it his restless endeavour to promote. This he taught in this Pulpit; and this he again taught out of it, and confirmed by the regularity of his Life. Of whom I have many things to say, and might speak of him in his Secular capacity, As to his Friendship, in which he was sincere, intire and stedfast; As to his Conversation, in which he was free, without levity; Grave without moroseness, Instructive without imposition; and not without such a competency of skill, even in matters relating to this present life, as did render him useful to others, and capable of advising them that wanted it. Rom. 10. 1.

I might speak of him as to the Government of himself in his exact Temperance and Sobriety; as to his Family, in his affectionate tenderness as a Husband and a Father, and in the care he took of the meanest of those that were about him, and the Exercises of Family-devotion.

But

A Sermon Preach'd at the

But that which I at this time shall principally respect, is the discharge of his Ministerial Office, in which he took a special delight, and made it the principal business of his Life, laying hold of all opportunities of doing good in private and in publick.

In publick, how constant and diligent, useful and practical was he in Preaching! Preaching with that plainness as might be suitable to the meanest capacity, and designed to the most useful purposes of sound Doctrine, and unblameable life; Preaching as one that was in earnest himself, and endeavouring to persuade others so to be.

What care did he, again, take to instruct the Youth! what pains in the little School that by his industry, and the pious Contribution of well-disposed Persons was Erected in the Neighbourhood! which I hope will not die with him, but by the same or like good and charitable hands be supported and continued.

In private, how many did he lend his helping hand to, encouraging them in the way of Religion, resolving their Doubts, comforting them in their Sorrows, directing their Endeavours! And this he did with sweetness and tenderness, giving an easie access and admittance even to the meanest, and hearing them with patience.

And in the mean time, whilst like a good *Samaritan* he was pouring oyl into the wounds of others, and administering such seasonable reliefs as their case did require, He himself shewed by the cheerfulness and liveliness of his spirit, that Religion was no sadning or uncomfortable state; but that however it might appear to drooping and melancholly minds, whatever it might appear to such as looked but little into it,

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or had little or no experience of it ; it was indeed the most comfortable state in the world to those that were intimately acquainted with it.

To this let me add the care he took of the Sick, visiting them with great application, sparing no pains to prepare such for another state ; of which his last Sickness and the occasion of his death was too deplorable an Instance, that whil'st thus exceeding solicitous about others ; he was careless of himself ; and whil'st the dying Patient receiv'd Spiritual Consolation from him, he in all probability drew what proved a mortal Infection to himself.

Which brings me to his last Hours : It pleased God to give him some Premonitions and Warnings of his approaching End ; I mean not only by the dangerous disease he laboured under the former part of the year ; but also by such impressions upon his mind as seem'd to carry in them the finger of God. So that for some Months past he would be often speaking, and I may say, preaching to his Wife submission to the will of God, if he should think fit to take him out of this life to a better.

For this reason, it may well be supposed that he was very desirous to see some of his Relations that lived remote from hence ; and though newly come from one Journey, immediately made another to pay them a Visit (where he had not been for some years) or rather, as he told them, to take his last Farewell.

And accordingly he set his House and Affairs in order, made his Will ; and if I may take notice of so small a matter, among the greater, he composed his own Epitaph ; which though plain (as he intended) is very expressive of his Piety, and of the care he took of the People committed to his Charge.

A Sermon Preach'd at the

And then it was no wonder when all this was done, to find him compos'd at his approaching End, and to behave himself as he had lived; shewing an excellent temper of mind, heartily resigning himself up through Jesus Christ to God, the Father of Spirits, and the Father of Mercies; whom in that condition he entirely depended upon, and found the greatest, I may say the only supports from.

With what submission did he receive the sentence of his Dissolution! With what transport and joy did he speak of our blessed Saviour, and the happiness he hoped for, or rather doubted not to be made partaker of, by him!

With what tenderness did he bewail our differences, and that spirit of censuring, reviling and dividing, that so much prevails; and especially when after all, such must come (if ever they be happy) to joyn in the Church-triumphant with those whom, too often, they refuse to converse and communicate with here, in the Church-militant!

With what comfort did he take leave of his Friends, of his Wife and Children, calling them one by one in his last interval to him, and giving each of them such advice as a dying Friend, Husband and Father, and a dying Christian, would give to those whom he affectionately loved!

And now what is the issue of all this, but that we should reflect upon it, and reflect upon our selves?

Who of you that heard the last Sermon of our deceased Friend six days ago, but if you had known it should have been the last, would have hearkned to it with another sort of attention! you would then have entertained it as the last Words of a dying Man. It was observed, that though he always spoke

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spoke with an affectionate warmth, that he then spoke beyond himself, with a concernment more than ordinary; as if he were sensible it should be his Valedictory, and the last Sermon, and That the last opportunity he should have of Preaching to this people. It was the last indeed; but we read of *Abel*, that by his Faith, *he being dead, yet speaketh.*

Hebr. 11. 4.

Our Friend is dead, his Body lies there before us; he has no Tongue to speak, nor Eye to observe how you receive his Doctrine; but he yet *speaketh* to you in his Doctrine and Example; and I hope, as it was said of *Abel*, he shall for that reason be *yet spoken of*, amongst you.

ἐπὶ λαλεῖται.
So the Margin.

And Oh that his Words were written, *not with ink*, but (as *St. Paul* saith) *with the spirit of the living God*, in your hearts and lives, *to be known and read of all men*: Or howsoever that last Sermon or other Discourses of his may have been neglected or forgot; let us remember the Caution which the Apostle here advises all to take; and *Fear*, lest a promise being left us of entering into this rest, any of us should come short of it.

2 Cor. 3. 23.

F I N I S.

E R R A T. Page 4. line 6. after *form* read of *Persecution*.

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